

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOOTBALL CLUB SUPPORTS ADDICTS TRANSITION FROM REHAB TO COMMUNITY

Currumbin Eagles Forms Partnership with Goldbridge Rehabilitation Services to Transition Successfully Rehabilitated Drug and Alcohol Abuse Patients into Normal Life

With the Gold Coast and Queensland reporting higher rates of drug and alcohol misuse than the national average, a local rehabilitation facility is placing emphasis on community awareness and calling on local businesses to support their clients with the successful integration back into the community.

Goldbridge Rehabilitation Centre, located in Southport, has recently forged a partnership with Currumbin Eagles NRL Club to implement the League Safe -'Yellow Shirts Program' allowing a selection of successfully rehabilitated clients to obtain their Blue Card and complete a basic First Aid course, fully funded by Goldbridge.

Once both certifications are achieved, the Goldbridge clients then participate in sideline support for weekend NRL games for teams ranging from under 7's through to under 17's, including assisting the coach with warm-ups and cool-downs, running water to players, passing messages from the coaches to players and immediate assessment of injuries.

According to Charlie Blatch, CEO of Goldbridge, recent statistics from a number of industry sources identify the Gold Coast as having a higher rate of risky alcohol consumption when compared to other cities throughout Australia, and point to a higher rate of drug offences in the Gold Coast Police District than the rest of Queensland.

"Even without this evidence, we can't continue to ignore the alarming news reports of drug and alcohol fuelled violence, traffic incidents, and local drug syndicates," Mr. Blatch said.

"We need to acknowledge that the Gold Coast has a serious problem and call on the Government and community for greater participation in treating and managing the issue as these incidents are very costly to our communities in a magnitude of different ways."

"For example, recent studies have revealed that individual prison placements in Queensland cost the tax payer around \$116,000 per annum, or \$318 per day, and a stay in a small public hospital can cost four times that amount."

"In comparison, individual placements at the Goldbridge residential facility are around \$18,000 per annum of \$50 per day, which is partly funded by the clients themselves."

"Our programs treat the issue at grassroots level, reducing drug use and associated criminal behaviors while improving physical / mental health, increasing socially acceptable behavior including employment and educational involvement, in addition to saving their life," said Mr. Blatch.

Mr. Blatch believes the local community has a responsibility towards fostering this awareness to address the burgeoning problem and to move towards more successful rehabilitation outcomes within the Gold Coast and greater Queensland region.

“Once Goldbridge residents have detoxified in a hospital facility and then completed our six month in-house rehabilitation program, the next step is to integrate them back into the wider community while embracing a healthy outlook to life,” said Mr. Blatch.

“We are very grateful to the Currumbin Eagles NRL Club for assisting with this transition process, offering Goldbridge clients the opportunity to be active, socialise and participate in a ‘normal’ weekend activity,” he said.

According to Currumbin Eagles Club President, Lindsay Hill, the Club recognises it has a responsibility to the community by assisting individuals to improve their wellbeing, with the Goldbridge ‘Yellow Shirts program’ being one of many community programs.

“Our club is very conscious that people who become involved in sporting activities join a club for more reasons than just fitness, such as for character development and an avenue for social interaction with others,” said Mr. Hill.

This new partnership model with the Currumbin Eagles NRL is one of Goldbridge’s 25 Year Milestone Celebration initiatives, marking the organisation’s 25 years working with the local community in the provision of successful drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

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INTERVIEW AND PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES:

- Interview opportunities available upon request with Charlie Blatch, CEO of Goldbridge
- Photo Opportunity with Currumbin Eagles NRL Club and Goldbridge “Yellow Shirts Program’ clients:
 - **When:** Saturday 28th June, 8:30am – 10:00am (On field at 9:00am)
 - **Where:** Currumbin Eagles NRL Club, Merv Craig Sporting Complex 26 Galleon Way Currumbin Waters, Queensland, 4223

Background Information:

Goldbridge is Queensland’s leading and most experienced drug and alcohol rehabilitation provider for those in greatest need. Goldbridge was established in 1987 with the vision of minimising the level of social and family dysfunction, disease, injury and premature death, primarily associated with the misuse and dependency of alcohol and other drugs. Today, the organisation continues to uphold and deliver on this vision, run by a passionate and experienced team of nine staff, backed by a skilled Board of Directors. The facility offers a results-driven program focused on radical personal change, enhanced psychological well-being and social functioning, reducing the risk of relapse and assisting to overcome the challenges of settling back into mainstream society. The organisation has built a reputation amongst past and current residents as the key program on the Gold Coast that achieves real and sustainable recovery outcomes. This reputation continues to result in high levels of enquiry and referrals.

* **Statistics:** Gold Coast Medicare Local (GMCL) – Health and Wellbeing Plan, Gold Coast Medicare Local Region; Population Profile and Addendums: Addendum 1: Mental Health, Drugs & Alcohol, Vol. 1, 2012:14, GCML